

John Taylor Gatto

Speech to the

Vermont Homeschooling Conference

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*(Note: John Gatto is the former New York State **Teacher of the Year** who renounced the government school system in his landmark book **DUMBING US DOWN**. He is constantly in demand as a public speaker.*

As a bit of background, the industrial titans of the 1890's began to think that not only could the production line be engineered, but people's lives could be engineered as well, in order to work like homogeneous robots with the machines. People like Rockefeller and Carnegie gave huge sums to prominent academics to see if this could be realized through the educational system. They found that to a considerable extent it could, and it is still being done today as evidenced in Congressional Record during the Clinton administration. This is the story that John Gatto has to tell.-DB)

What I intend to talk to you about this afternoon is what I understand you are aware of -- the positive goals and values that you seek as homeschoolers. But I want to talk about the specifics of what you're fleeing, because what you're fleeing is alive and well in the green state of Vermont. Perhaps Vermont is one of a half-a-dozen states that the U.S. Department of Education uses as testing grounds. I believe they picked Vermont because they understand that you people are so reasonable that you're always willing to negotiate. Anyway, I have some information to bring to you on a different outlook on what the intention of schools is. The title of this talk is:

A SHORT ANGRY HISTORY OF

AMERICAN FORCED SCHOOLING

Between 1967 and 1974 teacher training in the US was covertly revamped through the coordinated efforts of a small number of private foundations, certain universities, global corporations and several other interests working through the U.S. Department of Education and through key state education departments, one of which is the state of Vermont.

Three critical documents in this transformation are Benjamin Bloom's multi-volume TAXONOMY OF EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES. That was the first. The second was a many-state project begun in 1967 called DESIGNING EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE, and it was set forth in an enormous manual of nearly 1000 pages and finally

the BEHAVIORAL TEACHER EDUCATIONAL PROJECT which came in a manual of over 1000 pages. These were inserted into every state education department in the country and moneys were inserted there to pay faculty salaries a certain range of bribes for the school districts that would pioneer the use of these things.

Let me start with the DESIGNING EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE papers. They were the collusion with the federal education department and the presumably independent state agencies. They redefined education after the 19th century Germanic fashion as (quoting now from the document) "as a means to achieve important economic and social goals for the national character" -- and I would hasten to add that none of those goals included the maximum development of your son or daughter. State agencies would henceforth "act as Federal enforcers insuring compliance of local schools with Federal directives". The document proclaimed that (I'm quoting again), "each state education department must be an agent of change", proclaimed further "change must be institutionalized". I doubt if an account of this appeared in any newspaper in the state of Vermont or for that matter any newspaper in the country (U.S.). Education departments were (I am quoting a third time) "to lose their identity as well as their authority in order to form a partnership with the Federal Government".

The BEHAVIORAL TEACHER EDUCATIONAL PROJECT outlines specific teaching reforms to be forced on the country, unwillingly of course, after 1967. It also sets out, in clear language, the outlook and intent of its invisible creators. Nothing less than quoting again "the impersonal manipulation through schooling of a future America in which few will be able to maintain control over their own opinions", an America in which (quoting again) "each individual receives at birth, a multipurpose identification number which enables employers and other controllers to keep track of their [underlings]", (underlings is my interpretation, everything else came out of the document), "and to expose them to the directors subliminal influence of the state education department and the federal department acting through those whenever necessary".

Readers learned in 1967, of course you and I were not among those readers, that chemical experimentation on minors would be normal procedure in the post 1967 world. That is a pointed foreshadowing of the massive Ritalin interventions which would accompany the student body of the future. Teachers were expected to function as government change agents and their trainers, (this the first time reading this document that I realized that the expression "teacher trainer", like animal trainer, is an odd locution) the teacher trainers, were notified that behavioral science would henceforth replace academic curriculum in schools. The project identified the future as one (again I'm quoting) "in which a small league would control all important matters, one in which participatory democracy would largely disappear". Children would be made to see that their classmates, and indeed the average man or woman were so inadequate, were so irresponsible that they had to be controlled and regulated. The tremendous rise in school violence and general chaos in the late 1960's, a period when teachers and schools across the land were stripped of their ability to discipline children, might be seen as a convenient public justification for sharp constrictions of traditional liberty. Each outburst resonated through the press like a billboard for emergency measures. According to the BEHAVIORAL TEACHER EDUCATIONAL PROJECT, post modern schooling would focus, (I quote directly from the document), "on pleasure cultivation and

interpersonal relationships and other attitudes and skills compatible with a non-work world". It makes sense of course, doesn't it? That irresponsible semi-illiterate people could not be trusted with much responsibility so in the new change agency schooling, which is called for by this national teacher training document, the teacher is a therapist, translating the prescriptions of the social psychologists into practical action research in the classroom.

The third critical gospel signaling a great transformation at hand, to those in the know, was Bloom's TAXONOMY OF EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES, which has, since its publication, spawned a number of descendant forms, like "mastery learning", "outcome based education" and "school to work" business-government-economic projects. Dr. Bloom's compilation was a tool, (I'm quoting from Dr. Bloom), "a tool to classify the ways individuals are to act, think or feel as the result of participating in some unit of instruction". I would be dubious if any parent in the U.S. would send their children to schools under these auspices if they were thinking people. In this fashion, children would learn proper attitudes and have their improper attitudes (brought from home) remediated. In all stages of the school manipulations testing would be essential to locate the child's mind on an official continuum.

But why is all of this being done? One large piece of the answer can be found in the current edition of FOREIGN AFFAIRS MAGAZINE, which will be in all your libraries. It is surely one of the most influential periodicals in the U.S., perhaps in the world, which extols the American economy with its massive lead over Europe and Asia, and an article written by the owner of U.S. News and World report in the New York daily news by Mort Zukerman. Zukerman attributes our superiority which he claims can not be lost in the 21st century, so huge is it, to certain characteristics of the American worker and the American workplace. If you read between the lines of this article it's quite easy to see that the advantage that Zukerman boasts of can only come from our training of the young. What does the advantage consist of then? According to Zukerman in the first position, the American is a pushover, dominated by management, with little to say about what happens. By contrast says Zukerman, Europe suffers from a strong crafts tradition which demands a worker voice in decision making. Asia is even worse off: their tradition, religion, and government interferes with what business could do. The Islamic world is so far behind, so crippled by religion that Zukerman doesn't even bother to mention it.

His analysis makes further telling points about the American worker and the American consumer. Like nowhere else, he says "workers in America live in a constant state of panic, a panic against being left out, they know that companies owe them nothing, there is no power to appeal to for management's decisions. Fear is our secret supercharger, it gives management the flexibility other nations will never have". Zukerman says that even after 6 years of economic expansion, American workers including management workers fret they might not survive. He is boasting of course - this is not a critical article, this is a laudatory article. In 1996 almost half the employees of large firms feared being laid off. This is double the number fearful of being laid off in 1991 when things were not nearly as good as they are now. This keeps wages under control.

And finally, our endless consumption completes the golden circle. Consumption driven, says Zukerman, by an astonishing American addiction to novelty which provides

American businesses with the only domestic market in the world. Elsewhere in hard times, business dries up -- here we continue to shop till we drop, mortgaging our futures to keep the flow of goods and services coming. Remember this is not in any way a critical article. There can be no doubt that the fantastic wealth of American big business is a direct result of school training. Schools training a social lump to be needy, frightened, envious, bored, talentless and incomplete. The successful mass-production economy demands such an audience. It isn't anybody's fault. Just as the Amish small business, small farm economy requires intelligence, competence, thoughtfulness and compassion, ours needs a well managed mass -- level, anxious, spiritless families, godless and conforming; people who believe that the difference between Coke and Pepsi is matter worth arguing about. The American economy depends on schooling us that status is purchased and others run our lives. We learn there that sources of joy and accomplishment are external, that the contentment comes with the possessions, seldom from within. School cuts our ability to concentrate to a few minutes duration, creating a life-long craving for relief from boredom through outside stimulation. In conjunction with television and computer games, which employ the identical teaching methodology, these lessons are permanently inscribed. We become fearful, stupid, voiceless and addicted to novelty.

The secret of American schooling is that it doesn't teach the way children learn -- nor is it supposed to. Schools were conceived to serve the economy and the social order rather than kids and families -- that is why it is compulsory. As a consequence, the school can not help anybody grow up, because its prime directive is to retard maturity. It does that by teaching that everything is difficult, that other people run our lives, that our neighbors are untrustworthy even dangerous. School is the first impression children get of society. Because first impressions are often the decisive ones, school imprints kids with fear, suspicion of one another, and certain addictions for life. It ambushes natural intuition, faith, and love of adventure, wiping these out in favor of a gospel of rational procedure and rational management.

About a month ago, the New York Times sent a reporter to three daycare centers in Houston, Texas, one for white kids, one for black kids, and one for Hispanic kids. To everyone's surprise, he found that all three were identical, they were wonderful places, they were very well appointed, they were clean, bright, they were colorful. All looked fine. But according to the reporter, each gave only token personal attention to individual kids, because mathematically no more than that was possible. Communication was by cheerful admonitions like "Don't do that Wilma" or to-whom-it-may-concern statements like "it's line-up time!". Workers saw their goals more as managing children than interacting with them. Managing children is what professional childcare is about in America. Schools are part of the professional child care empire and education has nothing whatsoever to do with it.

Behind the melodrama of lurid school headlines, hammer attacks on pregnant school teachers, paramilitary assaults on elementary schools by students whose cheeks have never felt a razor, pass the red herring -- the falling or rising of S.A.T. scores. What seems clear to me after 30 years inside the business, is that school is a place where children learn to dislike each other. What causes that? The self hatred, ineptitude, and generalized antagonism are certainly the justification for a managed society that

deviates from the founding documents of this nation, which conferred sovereignty on ordinary people, not on experts.

The U.C.L.A. study done recently of a 1000 public schools found that the teachers" averaged 7 minutes daily in personal exchanges with students. Divided among 30 kids, that is a total of 14 seconds each. The constant scrambling for attention and status in the close confines of the classroom., where those are only officially conferred by an adult who lacks both the time or the information (to be fair), teaches us to dislike and distrust each other. This continuous auction of favors, has something to do with our anger, and our inability to be honest or responsible, even as grown-ups. Yet, ironically, irresponsibility serves the management ideal much better than decent behavior ever could. It demands close management, it explains all those lawyers, all those courts, all those policemen and all those schools. Now either we are structurally undependable, necessitating constant policing, or somehow we have been robbed of our ability to become responsible.

Consider the strange possibility that we have been deliberately taught to be irresponsible and to dislike each other for some good purpose. I am not being sarcastic or even cynical. I spent 19 years as a student, and 30 more as a school teacher and in all that time I was seldom asked to be responsible, unless you mistake obedience and responsibility for the same thing, which they certainly are not. Whether student or teacher, I gave reflective obedience to strangers for 49 years. If that isn't a recipe for irresponsibility then nothing is. In school your payoff comes from giving up your personal responsibility, just doing what you're told by strangers even if that violates the core principles of your household. There isn't any way to grow up in school, school won't let you. As I watched it happen, it takes three years to break a kid, 3 years confined to an environment of emotional neediness, songs, smiles, bright colors, cooperative games, these work much better than angry words and punishment. Constant supplication for attention creates a chemistry whose products are the characteristics of modern school children -- whining, treachery, dishonesty, malice, cruelty and similar traits. Ceaseless competition for attention in the dramatic fishbowl of the classroom, I have never seen this dynamic examined in the public press -- not in 50 years of reading the public press. Ceaseless competition for attention in the dramatic fishbowl of the classroom, reliably delivers cowardly children, toadies, school stoolies, little people sunk into chronic boredom, little people with no apparent purpose, just like caged rats, pressing a bar for sustenance, who develop eccentric mannerisms on a periodic reinforcement schedule. Those of you who took rat psychology in college will know what I'm referring to -- just like the experience of rat psychology, the bizarre behavior kids display is a function of the reinforcement schedule in the confinement of schooling to a large degree. I'm certain of that. Children like this need extensive management.

Suppose that producing incomplete beings is the purpose of modern schooling. Further suppose, there is a rational defense for doing it, Suppose a century ago, far sighted men and women, although they were largely men, saw that to realize the potential in machinery and fossil fuel, that the bulk of the population would have to be dumbed down and made dependent -- not to hurt people -- but because only in this fashion could a population of producers, which surely characterizes the American scene then, be

turned into the consumers required by a commercially intense economy. That the labor force could be made sufficiently adaptable to endure modern machinery which must rapidly evolve for ever and ever. This specific engineering problem confronted this key group of business people and philosophers at the beginning of the 20th century. How could a proud liberty-loving nation of independent families and villages be turned from its historic tradition of self-reliance and independence? Grown ups were unlikely to be tractable. The history, the highly personalized practice of local schooling, offered another possibility. Social thinkers have speculated for millennia, that a political state which successfully seizes control of the young could perform economic miracles. That idea is at least 2300 years old. And while the only instrument adequate for such a project, forced schooling, had never been more than a freak in the western world, it had been successful in one place, the military-theocracy of Prussia and the Germanies. Horace Mann's pilgrimage to Prussia in the 1840's became a harbinger of our future set in motion. The 20th century ends with mass schooling threatening to capture early childhood too -- in a round of forced kindergarten exercises. And even after a century of victorious laws of schooling, inspired by Horace Mann's love of Prussia, there is no agreement on what an educated American should look like. School is still a police activity at the end of the 20th century -- as it was at the beginning. And education for Americans remains a slippery concept.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the power to determine what education meant was vested in the managers of the new forced school institution. It was exactly as if in winter an Eskimo gave over meat to a polar bear for safekeeping. "Here you big bear, watch this seal meat until I get back". In the first decades of the new school century the group of famous academics symbolically led by Edward Thorndike (he is the Thorndike of the Thorndike/Barnard dictionary), and John Dewey of Columbia's Teacher's College and their industrialist allies, decided to bend government schooling to business and the political state just exactly as it been bent in Prussia. A higher mission would exist too. Schools would serve as "instruments of managed evolution, establishing conditions for selective breeding before the masses take things into their own hands" (now I quoted that from a published essay by Edward Thorndike at Columbia Teacher's college in 1911). Standardized testing would separate those fit to breed and those fit to work and those unfit. Back before WW1, educational psychology, which was the creation of Edward Thorndike, had established that certain kinds of mental training in history, in philosophy, in rhetoric, for instance, made students resistant to manipulation because it developed independent intellect, it reduced their plasticity. That knowledge coupled with the new German directive to serve corporation and government, provided a sufficient motive to dumb instruction down.

Between 1906 and 1920, a handful of world famous industrialists and financiers, together with their private foundations, hand picked University administrators and house politicians, and spent more attention and more money toward forced schooling than the national government did. Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller alone spent more money than the government did between 1900 and 1920. In this fashion, the system of modern schooling was constructed outside the public eye and outside the public's representatives. Now I want you to listen to a direct quote, I have not altered a word of this, it's certainly traceable through your local librarians. From the very first report issued

by John D. Rockefeller's General Education Board -- this is their first mission statement: "In our dreams, people yield themselves with perfect docility to our molding hands. The present education conventions of intellectual and character education fade from their minds and unhampered by tradition we work our own good will upon a grateful and responsive folk. We shall not try to make these people or any of their children into men of learning or philosophers, or men of science. We have not to raise up from them authors, educators, poets or men of letters, great artists, painters, musicians, nor lawyers, doctors, (he's really covering the whole gamut of employment isn't he?) statesmen, politicians, creatures of whom we have ample supply (whoever the pronoun we is meant to stand for there). The task is simple. We will organize children and teach them in an perfect way the things their fathers and mothers are doing in an imperfect way".

Now you might say that is quoting out of context and I would speculate what the context of such a statement could possibly be, but in any case, if you want to get the whole thing, that's OCCASIONAL LETTER NO.1. OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION BOARD, which I told you was spending more money than the Federal Government on education of the first two decades of this century.

The real purpose of modern schooling was announced by the legendary sociologist Edward Roth in his manifesto of 1906 called SOCIAL CONTROL. Your librarian will easily be able to get a copy of this book. In it Roth wrote, (I am quoting) "plans are underway to replace family, community and church with propaganda, mass-media and education (of course he meant schooling)...people are only little plastic lumps of dough". Another insider, H. H. Cadard, chairman for the Psychology Department at Princeton, called government schooling approvingly -- "the perfect organization of the hive with the anthill". Cadard wrote further, "standardized testing would cause the lower classes to confront their biological inferiority, sort of like wearing a dunce cap. In time that would discourage reproduction of the ants on the anthill".

The first curriculum was dumbed down, then national testing was inserted, next morality was weakened and finally between 1970 and 1974, teacher training in the U.S. was comprehensively and covertly revamped. In 1971, the U.S. Office of Education, now committed to gaining access to your private lives and thoughts, granted contracts for seven volumes of change agent studies to the Rand Corporation. Change agent training was launched with Federal funding under the EDUCATION PROFESSIONS DEVELOPMENT ACT. Soon afterward, a book appeared called THE CHANGE AGENT'S GUIDE TO INNOVATION IN EDUCATION. Grants were awarded to colleges for the training of change agents while further Rand documents like FACTORS AFFECTING CHANGE AGENTS PROJECTS continued to pour forth for implementation of teacher training courses. Machievelli had been modernized.

Using schools as the principal forge, the building blocks for a self-perpetuating ruling dynasty, organized on scientific principles, moved into place during the first 5 decades of the 20th century. Obstacles like religion, tradition, family, the natural rights guaranteed by our founding documents were steadily beaten back. Schools slowly became, after WW1, a huge reconstruction project conducted with the enthusiasm of an evangelical religion. The traditional God was banished entirely before 1950 to be replaced by psychological missionaries in a social-work priesthood. Public school was

transmuted into a social laboratory without public knowledge or public consent. Think of what happened as a second American Revolution, striking down those perverse founding documents which granted sovereignty to ordinary people.

School was a lie from the beginning and continues to be a lie. You hear a great deal of nonsense these days about the need of a high tech economy for a well educated people, but the truth staring you in the face is that it requires no such thing. As our economy is rationalized into automaticity, and globalization, it becomes more and more an interlocking set of subsystems coordinated centrally by mathematical formulae which simply can not accommodate different ways of thinking and knowing. Our profitable system demands radically incomplete customers and workers to make it go. Educated people are its enemies, so is any nonpragmatic morality.

To get better schools that actually served us instead of suffocating us, we would need to successfully challenge certain scholastic and corporate assumptions. We would need to abandon, entirely, the idea that any such reality as mass-man actually exists. We would have to believe what fingerprints and intuition tell us -- that no two people are alike, that nobody can be accurately described by numbers, that trying to do this sets up a future chain of griefs. We would have to accept that there is no such thing as a science of pedagogy, nor is one possible -- that each individual has a private destiny. We would need to transfer faith to such principles and behave as if it were true. We would have to come to our senses and admit that knowledge is not a substitute for wisdom. We would have to believe each American has the right to live as he or she deems wise providing only they do no harm to others. And if the way individuals chose to live means disaster for global corporations, as the Amish way of life embraced by too many would surely mean disaster, the fateful choice would still have to be honored because it is protected by the only contract that defines us -- our founding documents and natural law. The brilliant dialectical balance struck by our founders was a way to keep power weak and off-balance. The official power and popular power both. Popular will would check government tyranny. Government would check popular tyranny over minority rights. This constant confrontation, this un-winnable war between two permanently flawed collectivizing principles, coercive government and bullying public opinion, produces liberty for those who want it. In the stalemate liberty escapes.

Lately what has happened is this: in an effort to avoid the damnable arguments of the people and to become more efficient, management has wrecked the political balance. It has made us all prisoners of management systems. School is it's vital ally. What we have built, mass forced schooling, cannot be reformed, it must be bashed. It was created by people, people can take it apart.

Thank you very much. (Applause)...

Question and Answer Period

(more good information)

Q. "I've heard recently that not only is the question of STUDENTS' compliance a requirement in these schools, but now there is a lot of concern about non-conforming

parents who are too interested in the education of their children. So someone just told me about the existence of an enemies list in California among school administrators?

A. Yes, there is one in here in Vermont too.

Q. ...and I was just going to ask you to address the possible uses of that enemies list.

A. The Rand studies, there are 7 volumes of them, deal with every contingency that could arrest the forward movement of this project. One possible contingency, especially in states like Vermont and New Hampshire, were people who came out of a freedom, a liberty tradition, they knew how to speak on their feet, they knew how to stand out, don't cross this line. So a technique was invented that's fascinating, which is used commonly in Vermont and in every state in the U.S. It is called the Delphi technique -- this is one of thousands of similar things contained in these enormous documents.

The Delphi technique works like this; you have a gripe with a school in Eastern Vermont with the state education department. Someone calls the department and the grippers together and says, "I'm sure we can solve this like ladies and gentlemen", but the facilitator has already been instructed what the outcome should be. It works like this, its been taught for years, I'm sure it is still taught although they're a little more discreet now, since we've caught on where we can trail this thing. The facilitator asks everybody to be perfectly honest and hold nothing back about who they are. Sometimes they write it on a large sheet of paper and it is pasted up around the walls, ostensibly so that later you can group yourself with people who are in harmony with your ideas, but actually the purpose of that is for the facilitator to identify those few people who have the ability to overturn the authority of the state or the facilitator -- and to stop the process of the project. What happens then is that the facilitator personally insults one of the people and says "you're wasting these people's time, we have enough of your nonsense". You know about this first hand.

I was the representative of New York State. At the Snowbird Conference held by Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. in Salt Lake City in 1990, and with three other state representatives, we were to ostensibly to design a form of schooling for the future... and ours was highly Libertarian. At the moment we were to present these things, the facilitator, assuming I was probably the ring leader of the group, launched a personal assault and appealed to other members of this team, one teacher from each state, to stop me from wrecking this wonderful chance for them to get publicity. I was of course astonished. He was astonished too because from Pittsburgh we have ways to deal with this sort of thing. Of course it was a very, very unpleasant experience. The final document was published by Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. Not a word of the contribution of our team appeared there. That's one of a thousand techniques that were codified in the 1960's, of course they (the techniques) had been accumulating over the decades.

The design of the project appears between 1890 and 1910. It's simply that a group of people (and let me be just to them: they absolutely believed that they were working in the interests of everyone) set out to create a command economy and a command society. They worked through the Carnegie Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Ford Foundation, Russell Sage and no more than 8 other foundations. They work through about 20 universities, in this part of the world, Yale was and is the big one but still with John Hopkins, Harvard to some extent, the University of Chicago in the middle

of the country, Stanford on the west coast. They were also coordinated to certain corporations, not all the Fortune 500, but about 30 of the corporations, Colgate being in the central group, Procter and Gamble in the central group, we could spend a week, but the truth is with thousands of people trying to solve this problem with why schooling has turned so bad, that digging a fact here and a fact there and a part of a book here, that the picture is very, very clear now:

It wasn't until the end of the Second World War that the thing got full speed. During the Second World War, the American ability to read, which was astonishing, unbelievable and unprecedented in world history was substantially deconstructed in the schools. If you look at the figures, not from the state education department test, but from the Army general classification scores, the difference between America in 1940 and in 1950 is a planetary difference. It is as though it isn't the world any longer. Let me simply take the black population for example,. In 1940 84% of American blacks who applied for the army, and of course there were 18 million people applying then or being drafted in 1940-41, 84% were fully literate, in 1950 the figure had dropped to 38%, in 1960 to 28% and there're further diminutions of that. The American white population in 1940, according to the 18 million people who were inducted during the Second World War was 99% literate. The New York State Education Department issued last year that stated that said only 50% of the state adults could read bus instructions, and fill out forms like income taxes forms -- simple forms.

[Some other day] we'll have enough time to sit down together over a pot of ice tea or whatever passes for a pause up here in Vermont. There's tons of data now available -- who, when, what, where, how. The project continues but people like you have now made serious inroads into it. There is a loss of morale inside this thing, for one thing, because of the explosive growth in the home schooling population and their magnificent success. Between July 13th and July 17th of this year I'm invited to speak before non-administrative groups from Claremont, California to Appleton, Wisconsin down to Atlanta... every few hours they are flying me somewhere. There will be 100 to 150 administrators and you just heard about half of what they are going to get. Because of the limitations of time here, I spared you a lot of the detail work., but I won't spare them the detail work. So anyway it's a long-winded answer..

Q. What can a person do within the present school system?

A. You can act, and some rural communities do, but not very many. You can individually act as a kind of a saboteur as long as you aren't overly public about what you are doing -- sure an individual school teacher or an individual principal -- although very rare on the principal level -- because 20 people are waiting for those jobs, and the slightest deviation in administering instructions that seem to come from the state, (Vermont.), they never do -- they either come from Washington or the Carnegie Foundation or a number of think tanks -- so the slightest deviation is easy to log back at headquarters and then somehow or other a new school board says, "this incompetent principal or this superintendent has to move". The superintendents in the U.S. are bumped on the average of every three years. But I'll tell you something that isn't public knowledge. If the superintendent has left behind a record of loyalty to this project, the superintendent will find another place to land. If he's left behind a record of loyalty to the local citizenry --that's it -- there ARE no more jobs for that superintendent.

Q. I wonder if it would be possible to give us some information about the genesis of the NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION AND THE ECONOMY.

A. Mark Tucker's outfit. You've heard me make a glancing reference here to the experiments in China undertaken by Columbia Teacher's College. That was after the overthrow of the Chinese Empire which was largely done with American money and American brains and American financing. China was used as a testing laboratory for certain social ideas. If you ever read a biography about John Dewey- they will be very circumspect about the two years he went to live in China, in the 1920's. Kind of an odd venue for a --you know -- a scholarly gentleman from New York City.

Anyway, the Soviet Union also was a testing ground for certain social projects and, if we had time, I could document this and suggest certain books to read. But in any case...by 1986 at the U. of Moscow, the Progress Publishing Co in Moscow, a whole set of documents coordinating school with work were in place and projects to make sure that there was no entrepreneurial labor were also moved in place there. This document was translated by the National Center for Education and the Economy...they didn't say they translated these documents, this became the ground-zero document for school-work legislation.

When Mr. Clinton was elected, an eighteen-page private internal letter went out. Someone put it on the internet, but the office that generated the letter did not deny it. Was it you?... Listen, I'd like to shake your hand. (Applause)

(note: The 18 page letter is at <http://www.rovers.net/~nbrook> Over two years ago, a copy of a letter to Hillary Clinton from Marc Tucker of the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE) first surfaced. Mr. Tucker's letter, sent to congratulate Hillary and then president-elect Bill Clinton, outlines in scrupulous detail the NCEE's plan for "human resource management" in the United States. Many of the plans and programs currently being implemented in many states, including Workforce Investment Boards and Certificates of Mastery, are a direct result of this proposal. Read the full text of the letter - all 18 pages of it - and you cannot continue to believe, as the state Department of Education would like us to, that all these programs are "home grown".)

Everywhere I go in the country people say that some benefactor put this out on the internet. An 18 page letter really specifying a certain time table, a window that would be open for a while. You would have to move very fast to get this thing underway.

Meanwhile David Rockefeller, at the U.N., not before the general assembly, but before project heads, was saying that the window is now wide open but it's not going to stay open forever. What this gentleman is referring to is the surfacing of the tip of an iceberg. In an undeniable fashion --utterly documented and not denied by the author of the project who is quite active right now.

I do think though that the forward thrust has been blunted somewhat. I have been in all 50 states and 7 foreign countries and I talk about the 50 states: there are groups everywhere. There were 500 in California, sometimes I would see 5000 in Tacoma or Atlanta. There is a populist revolution underway -- the press has only the slightest glimmering of. 10 people here, 500 there, 5000 there and they're interchanging information. And they're not people who shine shoes, although there is nothing wrong with people who shine shoes...I did that myself. They are people who have a certain understanding, even a measure of worldly success -- others who can not tolerate this

any longer. Where it will culminate, or when it will culminate I don't know, but I know it's far too large to be turned back now.

What they're trying to do now in California is certainly going to happen in Vermont, they're trying to buy (homeschool) people off. They'll throw you 3,000 bucks and they'll say you don't have to do anything different than you're doing now. But inside the engine of this thing, the plan laid down is that with the second generation of parents, which only take 5 to 6 years, you know, that what you do is to impose small regulations in that group, so small that people will say "Well it's 3,000 dollars, surely homeschooling is still a lot better than that in public schools", and with the third generation the regulations will be a lot more onerous. I urge you all to read an article in the current issue or last month's issue of the Free Man by Chris Cardiff.

(Note: THE SEDUCTION OF HOMESCHOOLING FAMILIES by Chris Cardiff

<http://people.netscape.com/ccardiff/seduction.html>)

it's a very careful analysis of the strategy of bribing parents and the local communities to surrender, to come back under the umbrella so it doesn't appear that there is a conflict under way. In California in its 14 school districts, all upscale school districts are involved in this. Cardiff argues that the only way to deal with this is to resist the money, but as a saboteur all my life, I don't have any compunctions at all about taking government money, since it's my own money and yours you know -- and in fact NOT following the directives that come through. What this instrument cannot deal with is even a small amount of sand in its gears. It really requires a kind of total conformity. It can sit on one of you, or two of you, with this huge downward weight, but what it can't do is deal with groups of people who are determined. What it attempts to do is seal you off and ignore you until your kids grow up and the assumption is that you will go away. How do I know these things? I also get hired by the people who are doing this. I get to listen to them discussing strategy, I'm....I'm amazed that no one has caught on yet, but I suppose it'll happen.

Q. I wrote a letter, a long letter to my school about being much more involved with the training of my boys as a parent, and I feel after listening to you, that it is just this white blob, it's a big blob, and I'm crushed under it.

A. No, no it's a big blob but -- I used to know some structural engineering -- it has a tremendous weight that can sit on you and squash you but it doesn't have much internal cohesion. The people who operate this aren't of one mind. They hate each other.

They're scrambling for your dollars. There are a few ideologues around like Art Tucker and they're genuinely dangerous people. But most of the people do this because it's an easy buck. Or it's an easy minor status in the community. And then they'll cut each other's throat. The reason I survived for 30 years as a guerilla in the New York school system, which is the worst of all in the country, is simply that I discovered that I could set one assistant principal against another, or a principal against a superintendent because he wanted to be the next superintendent, he knew that these guys only lasted a short time. Or I could set Columbia University teachers calling against my school district. It was pathetically easy. Or I could set a large business that they all lived in fear of, any one of a number of them, against the school district and supporting my projects, in which case the school didn't dare say boo about it.

But what I discovered with all these layers of authority that really are there, that parents are unaware of: they don't like each other very much. They're after the same pile of money -- with the exception of people like Tucker who are after change agency and changing the nature of our government, the nature of our society. But most of them aren't that way -- just venal people, the kind of people you run into every day -- and they're capable, some of them, of changing their mind.

Look at what happened with the two great new wave psychologists, Carl Rodgers and Dave Maslow, who were used really as the religious text for psychologizing a classroom for years. At the end of both of those men's lives, they repudiated their life's work. Now I notice that the book in which they repudiated them, the new edition doesn't contain the essay in which they did that. However Rodgers' first assistant, a fellow named Colson, is traveling the country the same way I am, telling the truth about what they did and about what Rodgers' and Maslow's final determination on their life's work was. He was a trusted assistant and rightly so. He is an honorable man. So I see a lot of room for optimism. Isn't the fact that a group of home schoolers who numbered maybe 12,000 twenty years ago is now at least a million and a half, my hunch is more than that -- .isn't *that* some measure of how unstoppable the truth really is?

I mean every administrators' meeting I go to and get to sit around, homeschooling is on everybody's agenda. How can we get these people? How do they do this under our noses? Of course you didn't do this under their noses, what you did is what was right to do, what was fun to do, what worked.

Oh boy... sometimes I say this to people, " I don't understand how do you wake up in the morning. I wake up in the morning when it's dark, I walk the dog, if I forget to kiss my wife, she'll hit me over the head...and of all the wonderful human things to: do, to sit around scheming to steal the nation from its people, why? What is the point of this?", well anyway, anyway, I ramble on....

Well I'm certainly going to tell the folks in Santa Clara the same thing I told you tomorrow evening. Then I go to Boulder, Colorado.....each of the groups is different. What I discovered is, as long as nobody tells me what to say, I'll speak to anybody. So, I've spoken to the John Birch Society, for the NASA space center, for the White House, but also for the HogFarm Commune in Central Tennessee. And I'm telling you there is more similarity in everyday people about knowing what the truth is, and what is America, a place, the only place in the world where you can argue without the cops coming and beating you over the head and throwing you in jail, although that's happening more and more, but there still isn't anywhere else in the world you can do that, not England, not France, surely not China which is our new ally, I suppose..... Well, thank you, thank you very much, thanks for being here.

This transcript has not been edited by John Gatto. Corrections appreciated. -RW